

1 **ABSTRACT**

2 An image acquisition system has a computer and one or more imaging
3 devices coupled to the computer. Each imaging device has a device memory and
4 is capable of capturing a digital image and storing the image in its memory. An
5 image device manager is implemented in software on the computer to control
6 operation of the imaging devices. The image device manager presents a user
7 interface (UI) within the familiar graphical windowing environment. The UI has a
8 context space that pertains to a particular imaging context (e.g., scanning,
9 photography, and video). The UI also has a persistently-visible imaging menu
10 positioned within the context space that lists options particular to the imaging
11 context. For example, if the context space pertains to the digital camera context,
12 the menu lists options to take a picture, store the image on the computer, send the
13 image in an email, and so on. In the scanner context, the menu lists options to
14 select an image type, preview an image, send the image to a particular destination,
15 and scan the image. The image acquisition system also includes a set of
16 application program interfaces (APIs) that expose image management
17 functionality to applications. The APIs enable applications to manage loading and
18 unloading of imaging devices, monitor device events, query device information
19 properties, create device objects, capture images using the devices, and store or
20 manipulate the images after their capture.